

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

**Claim 1 (Cancelled)**

2. (New) An image forming apparatus comprising:

an image carrier for carrying an image;

a transfer device provided opposite to the image carrier with a first carrying path interposing therebetween, for transferring the image to an object which is carried through the first carrying path;

a discharge section for receiving an object, onto both surfaces of which an image is transferred by the transfer device, carried from the first carrying path;

a carrying device for carrying an object, onto one surface of which an image is transferred by the transfer device, toward the discharge section by a predetermined distance, and then carrying the object in a direction away from the discharge section; and

a second carrying path on which the object carried in the direction away from the discharge section by the carrying device is guided from a downstream side in the object carrying direction of the first carrying path and is guided in an inverted state to an upstream side of the first carrying path,

wherein the second carrying path includes a first roller pair upstream of the object carrying direction, a second roller pair downstream of the object carrying direction, and a third roller pair between the first and second roller pairs.

3.     **(New)** An image forming apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the third roller pair is provided at a substantially center portion of the second carrying path.
4.     **(New)** An image forming apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising a detection sensor for detecting the object, the detection sensor being provided in the vicinity of each of the first and second roller pairs.
5.     **(New)** An image forming apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the second carrying path connects the downstream side and the upstream side in the object carrying direction of the first carrying path, and forms a loop in incorporating with the first carrying path.
6.     **(New)** An image forming apparatus according to claim 5, further comprising:  
a sheet feed device for feeding the object to the first carrying path, the sheet feed device being provided outside the loop formed of the first and second carrying paths.
7.     **(New)** An image forming apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the second carrying path has a corner part and a substantially straight part, and the third roller pair is provided in the substantially straight part.
8.     **(New)** An image forming apparatus according to claim 2, wherein the second carrying path has three roller pairs along the object carrying direction.

9. **(New)** An image forming apparatus comprising:

a sheet feed roller for feeding an object onto which an image is to be transferred;

a first carrying path on which the object fed by the sheet feeding roller is carried;

an image carrier for carrying an image;

a transfer section for transferring the image onto the object;

a fixing section for fixing the transferred image on the object;

a discharge roller pair for discharging the object on which the image is fixed;

a receiving section provided in the vicinity of the discharge roller pair, for receiving the object discharged from the discharge roller pair; and

a second carrying path which merges with the first carrying path at a position upstream in the object carrying direction with respect to the image carrier and downstream in the object carrying direction with respect to the sheet feed roller and at a position downstream in the object carrying direction with respect to the fixing section;

wherein the discharge roller pair is rotatable in normal and reverse directions, and after it sends an object, on one surface of which an image is fixed, toward the receiving section by a predetermined distance, it sends the object in the direction away from the receiving section to guide the object to the second carrying path from the position downstream with respect to the fixing section; and

wherein the second carrying path guides the object sent by the discharge roller pair to the first carrying path at the position upstream in the object carrying direction with respect to the image carrier and downstream in the object carrying

direction with respect to the sheet feed roller in a state where the object is inverted, and has a first roller pair upstream in the object carrying direction, a second roller pair downstream in the object carrying direction, and a third roller pair between the first and second roller pairs.

10. **(New)** An image forming apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the second carrying path has first and second sensors for detecting an object onto which an image is to be transferred.

11. **(New)** An image forming apparatus according to claim 10, wherein the first sensor is provided in the vicinity of a beginning portion of the second carrying path, and the second sensor is provided in the vicinity of an end portion of the second carrying path.

12. **(New)** An image forming method comprising:

carrying an object onto which an image is to be transferred through a first carrying path to a portion between an image carrier for carrying an image and a transfer device which is provided opposite to the image carrier with the first carrying path interposing therebetween;

transferring an image onto one surface of the object by the transfer device;

carrying the object onto one surface of which the image has been transferred toward a discharge section provided on a discharge port of the first carrying path by a predetermined distance, and then carrying it in a direction away from the discharge section;

guiding the object to a second carrying path from a downstream side in the object carrying direction of the first carrying path;

carrying the object in an inverted state through a first roller pair provided upstream in the object carrying direction of the second carrying path, a second roller pair provided downstream in the object carrying direction of the second carrying path and a third roller pair provided between the first and second roller pairs; and

carrying the object which has been carried upstream of the first carrying path in an inverted state, to the transfer device on the first carrying path, transferring an image onto the other surface of the object, and discharging the object to the discharge section.